

Department of State – U.S. Embassy in Hanoi
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Program Office:	The American Center in Hanoi, Public Affairs Section
Funding Opportunity Title:	American Center – STEM Program
Announcement Type:	Grant/Cooperative Agreement/Awards to Individuals
Funding Opportunity Number:	SVM300-21-PAS-005
Deadline for Applications:	April 30, 2021, 11:59 p.m. (Vietnam Time)
CFDA Number:	19.441- ECE - American Spaces
Total Amount Available:	Range from \$1,000 to \$10,000

CONTACT INFORMATION

For assistance with the requirements of this NOFO, contact hanoi@state.gov

SUMMARY

This document contains detailed instructions and information about the Proposal process. Please read it carefully.

All applicants must submit proposals via this [link](#)

We will generally consider proposals up to \$10,000. A detailed budget of the project is required to justify the amount asked for.

Due to the volume of applicants and inquiries, the American Center does not accept requests for meetings or phone calls prior to application.

The following forms and information must be included before a grant can be issued. Please review these documents carefully.

1. Mandatory application form: SF424 (for Organizations) OR SF424I (for Individuals)
2. Grant proposal; and detailed budget narrative (using templates)
3. 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program
4. Required for Organizations only: SAM registration (*If you do not have an active SAM registration, please start the application process soon, this process can take up to 4 weeks*)

We will contact chosen applicants within four weeks after the deadline via email. Follow up meetings might be required to learn more about the proposal.

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A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy Hanoi Public Affairs Section (PAS) is pleased to announce available funding for the American Center Hanoi's **STEM Program**. All projects or part of the projects should take place at the American Center Hanoi in Hanoi and/or Thai Nguyen University Learning Resources and Information Technology Center in Thai Nguyen. Projects taking place outside the American Center in Hanoi or American Hangout in Thai Nguyen must include a written justification and description of how the Center or Hangout will be included in the program.

Proposals for projects must focus on one or more of the priority STEM programs and target audiences specified below:

- **Robotics Club:** The club will focus on courses and competitions for high-school and university students to learn about robotics concepts and STEM careers. Curriculum should include capstone projects or competitions to demonstrate participant comprehension.
- **Coding Club:** The club will focus on courses for high-school and university students or young professionals and recent graduates. The club will teach programming languages, app development, game design or other computer science skills. Club activities should encourage girl's participation and career exploration.
- **Digital Innovation:** Courses aimed at high school and university students to learn about artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics and visualization, 3D modelling, Internet of things (IoT), and/or virtual or augmented reality (VR/AR)
- **Makerspace:** Courses and competitions implemented at the American Center's Makerspace to nurture high school students' STEM curiosity and enhance creativity, innovation, and problem solving skills.
- **STEM Startups:** Courses for participants currently studying or working in STEM to introduce fundamentals of enterprise development, supply chain, and marketing practices that are essential to creating STEM startups. The program will help build a network and ongoing mentorship opportunities for students and young professionals in practicing STEM and entrepreneurial processes.

Criteria used for evaluating the proposals are as follows:

- Overall design and implementation plan for programs at the American Center Hanoi and/or Thai Nguyen University Learning Resources and Information Technology Center should closely align with one or more of the target audiences listed above.
- Target class sizes should range between 25 and 150 students.
- Competitive proposals will have 1.5 hours to four contact hours per week, with a minimum of 20 contact hours in total.
- Duration of the grant could be a maximum of one year.
- The grantee is encouraged to recruit students and course attendees.
- The language of instruction could be English or Vietnamese.
- The proposal must include detailed information about the project members and instructor(s), including CV, resume and other relevant professional experience.
- The instructors of the class should be trained teachers or working professionals

- The grantee is responsible for obtaining visas and any other legal documents required by the Government of Vietnam for staff to work in the country.
- Budget in the proposal must include:
 - Cost of teaching materials for teachers and learning materials for students
 - Salary of teachers
 - Marketing and recruiting costs
 - Field trips/Transportation cost (if any)
- The proposal must include a syllabus and a course monitoring and evaluation plan. Marketing strategies to recruit attendees are recommended but not required
- Provide post-course feedback on the students' performance.

Activities and expenses that are generally not funded include, but are not limited to:

- the purchase or long term lease of space or buildings in support of program activities;
- support personal business;
- construction projects;
- individual travel to conferences;
- scholarships to support educational opportunities or study for individuals;
- funding ongoing projects, which would otherwise be funded through other means;
- financial support for fundraising or fund development projects;
- projects that are inherently political in nature or that contain the appearance of partisanship/support to an individual or single party in electoral campaigns;
- political party and lobbying activities;
- projects that support specific religious activities;
- cash prizes for competitions;
- networking events;
- business-class travel;
- development projects without a clear public diplomacy component
- translations;
- alcoholic beverages.

Target Audience:

The target audiences for successful projects are Vietnamese students and young professionals ages 14 – 40.

Priority Region:

Activities should be mainly implemented/conducted in the American Center in Hanoi and/or Thai Nguyen University Learning Resources and Information Technology Center. Projects taking place outside the American Center in Hanoi or American Hangout in Thai Nguyen must include a written justification and description of how the Center or Hangout will be included in the program.

Length of performance period

Duration can be up to one year. Successful projects will be eligible for renewal.

The Public Affairs Section will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards on a non-competitive basis, subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S.

Department of State.

Award Amount

Award Amount will be up to \$10,000, a detailed budget is required to justify the amount. The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi reserves the right to award less or more than the amount of funds described in the absence of worthy applications or under such other circumstances as they may deem to be in the best interest of the U.S. government.

B. ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Submissions are encouraged from **U.S. and Vietnamese** entities with relevant programming and/or teaching experience. This experience should be documented in the proposal. Eligible entities include:

- not-for-profit, civil society/non-governmental organizations
- universities; non-profit educational institutions
- individuals

For-profit entities are not eligible. Previous federal award recipients who are not/were not in compliance with the terms of their financial and program reporting requirements are ineligible to apply. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they are in compliance with all applicable terms, conditions, and Office of Management and Budget guidance and requirements. Those organizations found to be in non-compliance may be found ineligible for funding or designated high risk if selected for funding.

C. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Application Deadline

Applications may be submitted for consideration at any time before the closing date of this opportunity; however, all submission must be received by **April 30, 2021, 11:59p.m. (Vietnam time)**. For the purposes of determining if an award is submitted on time, officials will utilize the time-stamp provided by email. **NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE FOR LATE SUBMISSIONS.**

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that an application has been received in its entirety. U.S. Embassy Hanoi bears no responsibility for applications not received before the due date or for data errors resulting from transmission.

2. Content of Application

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

Please ensure:

1. The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity;
2. All documents are in English;
3. All budgets are in U.S. dollars
4. All pages are numbered;

5. All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper;
6. All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

2.1. Mandatory forms can be downloaded [here](#), which include:

→ **Application for Federal Assistance form:**

- SF424 (Application for Federal Assistance - Organizations)
- SF424I (Application for Federal Assistance - Individuals)

→ **Proposal form:**

You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

- **Summary page:** include the applicant name and organization, project title, project period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the project.
- **Introduction to Organizational or Individual and the Capacity:** a description that shows ability to carry out the project, including information on all previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Project Justification/Needs Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed project is needed
- **Project Goals, Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the project is intended to achieve. The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals, as well as the sustainability and impact of the project. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Project Activities:** Describe the project activities and how they will help achieve the objectives, including a clear public outreach component.
- **Implementation Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the project activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the time-frame of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
- **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the project. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this project?

→ **Budget Narrative form:**

See section *F. Other Information: 1. Guidelines for Budget Narrative* below for further information.

2.2. Other required documents:

- 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program
- Proof of SAM registration (Organizations only) – *see section 4 for SAM registration procedure if your organization needs to obtain one.*

3. Submit your complete package [here](#)

- Do not WinZar or WinZip your application otherwise it may not be reviewed.
- Name your proposal form “**Application for SVM300-21-PAS-005_STEM Program**” in the submission link and attach required documents.

4. Required Registrations for Organizations (You can register for it later if you are selected, but we suggest that you plan for it because this process would take up to 4 weeks)

To be eligible to apply for U.S. Federal awards, **all** organizations (except individuals) need to obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

Step 4a Apply for a DUNS number¹

Organizations need a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet. If your organization does not have one already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or visiting <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

Step 4b: Apply for NCAGE code (this can be completed simultaneously with DUNS)

NCAGE application²: Application page here (but need to click magnifying glass and then scroll down to click new registration) <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>

Step 4c: Register or renew in the System for Award Management (SAM). You should register with your DUNS number and NCAGE code before proceeding to this step. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

SAM Account	Create SAM Individual User Account at www.SAM.gov
SAM Registration	Log in the account and select “Register New Entity”

See the [System for Award Management User Guide](#) for detailed instructions on how applicants request a UEI and register in SAM.gov.

Please note: Only DUNS, NCAGE, and SAM can assist with technical questions or problems applicants may experience during the registration process.

¹ For DUNS support: <http://support.dnb.com/>

² Instructions: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/Docs/US%20Instructions%20for%20NSPA%20NCAGE.pdf>

For NCAGE help from within the U.S., call 1-888-227-2423. For NCAGE help from outside the U.S., call 1-269-961-7766. Email NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

D. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Each technically eligible application submitted under this announcement will be evaluated and rated by a panel on the basis of the criteria detailed below. Each organization/individual can submit more than one proposal.

1. **Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea** – The program idea should be well developed, with sufficient detail about how project activities will be strategically carried out. The proposals should demonstrate originality and outline clear, achievable objectives. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline. The project scope is appropriate and clearly defined.
2. **Project Justification and Support of U.S. Public Diplomacy Priorities** – The project is likely to provide maximum impact in furthering the broader U.S. Public Diplomacy policy objectives. The project addresses one or more of the priority program objectives, target audiences, and geographic area identified in the solicitation. The proposal contains a compelling justification, demonstrating an in-depth understanding of the environment and citing specific factors creating/influencing the need for the proposed project.
3. **Organization's Record and Capacity** – The organization has expertise in the subject area and demonstrates the ability to perform the proposed activities. The organization demonstrates capacity for successful planning and responsible fiscal management. Applicants who have received grant funds previously have been compliant with applicable rules and regulations. Where partners are described, the applicant details each partner's respective role and provides curriculum vitae (CVs) for persons responsible for the project and financial administration. Proposed personnel, institutional resources and partners are adequate and appropriate.
4. **Cost-Effectiveness** - The budget and narrative justification are sufficiently detailed and linked. Projects with budgets that do not match the program narrative, and vice versa, are unlikely to be successful. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities. The results and proposed outcomes justify the total cost of the project. Budget items are reasonable, allowable, and allocable.
5. **Monitoring and Evaluation** - Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provide milestones to indicate progress toward Public Affairs Section goals. Projects should demonstrate the capacity for engaging in outcome-based evaluations and identify proscribed outputs and outcomes to measure how program activities will achieve the program's strategic objectives. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan should include output- and outcome-based indicators, baseline and target for each indicator, disaggregation if applicable, monitoring and evaluation tools, data source, and frequency of monitoring and evaluation.
6. **Sustainability and Impact** - Proposals should clearly delineate how elements of their program will have a multiplier effect and be sustainable beyond the life of the grant. A good multiplier effect may include but is not limited to, plans to build lasting networks for direct and indirect beneficiaries, follow-on training and mentoring, and continued use of project deliverables. A

strong sustainability plan may include demonstrating capacity-building results, a plan to generate revenue, or interest and support from the private sector. Proposed impact should be clearly outlined and coincide with public diplomacy goals.

E. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The successful applicant will be notified via email that its proposal has been selected to move forward in the review process; this email IS NOT an authorization to begin performance. The notice of Federal award signed by the Grants Officer (or equivalent) is the authorizing document. It shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is the Government Official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the Recipient through email transmission. The recipient may only incur obligations against the award beginning on the start date outlined in the DS-1909/DS-1909i award document that has been signed by the Grants Officer. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified via email, usually within 60 days, but may take longer. Decisions on funding are non-reviewable, nor subject to appeal.

2. Policy requirements

Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include:

- **Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions**, available at <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/U.S.-Department-of-State-Standard-Terms-and-Conditions-10-21-2020-508.pdf>
- All applicants must adhere to the regulations found in [2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Costs Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#).
- **Branding Requirements:** As a condition of receipt of a grant award, all materials produced pursuant to the award, including training materials, materials for recipients or materials to communicate or promote with foreign audiences a program, event, project, or some other activity under an agreement, including but not limited to invitations to events, press materials, and backdrops, podium signs, etc. must be marked appropriately with the standard, rectangular U.S. flag and American Center logo in a size and prominence equal to (or greater than) any other logo or identity.

3. Reporting Requirements

Recipients are required to submit program progress and financial reports electronically throughout the project period. Final certified programmatic and financial reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period.

Awardees that are deemed to be high risk may be required to submit more extensive and frequent reports until their high risk designation has been removed.

The Awardee must also provide the Embassy on an annual basis an inventory of all the U.S. government provided equipment using the SF428 form.

Failure to comply with the reporting requirement may result in a loss of funds, and will adversely affect your ability to successfully apply for future grants.

F. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Guidelines for Budget Narrative

Personnel and Fringe Benefits: Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the project, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the project.

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this project, for both program staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries. If the project involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel.

Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the project, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the project), and costs at least \$5,000 per unit.

Supplies: This category includes all tangible property other than those described as equipment. List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the project. If an item costs more than \$5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.

Contractual: Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor (a procurement relationship). Also describe any sub-awards to sub-recipient to carry out a portion of the Federal award.

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the project, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be itemized and explained.

Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the project activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

Indirect costs are not allowable on awards to individuals.

“Cost Sharing” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.

Alcoholic Beverages: Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.

2. Disclaimers

The Federal government is not obligated to make any Federal award as a result of the announcement. Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. The U.S. government also reserves the right to make an award in excess of the award ceiling.

If a proposal is funded, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of the Department of State.

This NOFO is subject to funds availability. Awards may be granted only if appropriated funds are allocated to the United States Embassy by Department of State central budget authorities.

3. Copyrights and Proprietary Information

If any of the information contained in your application is proprietary, please note in the footer of the appropriate pages that the information is Confidential – Proprietary. Applicants should also note what parts of the application, program, concept, etc. are covered by copyright(s), trademark(s), or any other intellectual property rights and provide copies of the relevant documentation to support these copyrights.